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LETTER DATED 3 SEPTEMBER 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon instructions from my Government I would like to draw the attention of the members of the Security Council to the unbearable and dangerous situation, now in its second year, that has been a cause of suffering in the Croatian towns of Zadar and Biograd and their outlying areas.

The towns of Zadar and Biograd, with their surrounding areas, sheltering more than a hundred thousand inhabitants and refugees, while being under constant shelling by Serbian irregulars from UNPAs, are deprived of normal water supply. On 9 September 1991 the Serbian irregulars, with the help of the so-called "Yugoslav Army", have cut the water supply lines for the area from the main water supply station on Zrmanja river in Zadar hinterland, and also shut down the water supply system in Kakma in the vicinity of Biograd. Since that time, the population has depended on alternative water supply sources that are not adequate, either in quantity or quality of water. Through enforced rationing, running water is available only for a couple of hours every third day, thus creating a situation that, aside from being extremely unpleasant in summer heat, can also be the cause of serious diseases.

The combined capacity of all alternative water sources that supply Zadar with water has been reduced to 150 litres/second, as compared to the pre-war standard of 1,000 litres/second. Additional water is being brought in by ship tankers from other areas of Croatia, but the effort cannot much improve conditions for inhabitants, refugees and displaced persons.

Severe drought that has hit the Adriatic coast this year further aggravated the situation in the area so that it has reached the proportions of humanitarian disaster.

The Government of Croatia has made a consistent effort to resolve the problem through negotiations within the framework of comprehensive negotiating process under the auspices of UNPROFOR, but with no visible results.

The Croatian Government urges that the problem of water supply of the Zadar and Biograd regions be treated as a serious humanitarian problem, which must be resolved independently of the comprehensive negotiating process. An immediate and determined United Nations action is required because the water resources should not be used as weapons in a political process.

Therefore my Government is addressing the Security Council requesting its action towards full re-establishment of the water supply system for Zadar and Biograd under the existing UNPROFOR mandate, by putting the water supply stations on Zrmanja river and in Kakma under efficient UNPROFOR control.

I would ask for your kind assistance for circulating this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ambassador Mario NOBILO
Permanent Representative